

on the ground lacked heads; this appeared to be evidence of the activity of foxes.

—T. M. SMITH, "Ardersier," Coolup.

The Little Whimbrel in South-western Australia.—In *The Birds of Western Australia* (Serventy and Whittell, 1948) the authors state that this species "has not been recorded south of North-west Cape, but as in the case of most of these rarer migratory shore-birds, it should be watched for anywhere in the State." I would like to place on record an occurrence this year of a single bird on my property at Coolup.

On March 14, 1949, I arrived back at "Yanjettee" after three weeks absence, during which period most of the swamps had dried out, and, except for the far southern swamps there was no surface water. There had been approximately one inch of rain in the week before I arrived back, but this had not left any surface water. The temperature was below normal. The big swamp to the north of the house was perfectly dry and had a crop of Japanese millet in the centre about three inches high. The millet covered about four acres and was surrounded by green couch and paspalum, while the rises around the swamp were covered in dry grass.

On my first visit to the swamp I noticed a brown bird among the grazing cattle in the millet field. It appeared quite at home and I just dismissed it as a Banded Plover which species is frequently seen in the area. It was not until March 20 that I realised the bird was a Little Whimbrel (*Numenius minutus*). It was very quiet and was difficult to flush except when hard-pressed; then it rose with a harsh cry and settled down a short distance away. I watched the bird for some time with a pair of Ross 12 x 50 glasses, during which period the bird was often within 15 feet of me. The median line on the head was very noticeable as well as the down-curved bill of about $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 inches in length. Its legs were olive-grey. In flight the upper part of the body was a uniform brown with a darker tip to the wings, and it showed no white rump whatsoever. It fed about in the grass picking up what appeared to be cut-worms or other grubs.

The bird stayed with us until April 15, the day after the first winter rain started. The period from March 14 till April 15 was marked by a spell of abnormally cool weather in March and abnormally hot in April. During the bird's stay I often flushed it, and though it generally remained in the millet patch, which was a light green in colour, it did on occasions take to the dry grass on the rises where it appeared just as much at home. It never at any time to my knowledge visited the southern swamps, which were within a quarter of a mile, though many waders were to be seen there including Wood-sandpipers, Greenshanks, White-headed Stilts and Black-fronted Dotterels. It really gave one the impression that grassland was its natural habitat—even to the way it crouched low in the grass on one's approach.

—ANGUS ROBINSON, "Yanjettee," Coolup.